<https://tpchd.org/healthy-people/food-safety-for-consumers/>

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**Consumer Food Safety**

**Eat food, stay healthy.**

**Why is safe and healthy food important?**

When you eat, you shouldn’t have to worry about getting sick.

**What makes food unsafe to eat?**

Unsafe food leads to more than 200 types of diseases. We can’t usually see or smell bacteria, viruses or hazards in food.

Unsafe food is especially dangerous for infants, young children, elderly and sick people. The main causes of foodborne illnesses include:

* Food from unsafe sources.
* Undercooking raw meat, eggs, fish and shellfish.
* Not keeping cold food cold or hot food hot.
* Dirty equipment.
* Not washing hands with soap and hot water.
* Handling food when you are sick.

**What can you do?**

**When dining out:**

* Look for a Health Department permit posted in establishments or a decal on food trucks.
* Tell a manager if you see food workers:
  + Touch food with bare hands.
  + Leave the bathroom without washing their hands.

[](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Food-Safety-at-Home.pdf)

**When preparing food at home:**

* Wash hands and surfaces often.
* Separate raw meat from other food.
* Cook food to the right temperature.
* Chill food quickly to 41°F or below.
* Keep hot food at 135°F or above.
* Don’t prepare food for others when you’re sick.

Use our *Food Safety at Home checklist* to prepare, cook, serve and refrigerate food safely. Available in [English](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Food-Safety-at-Home.pdf), [Spanish](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Food-Safety-at-Home-Spanish.pdf), [Vietnamese](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Food-Safety-at-Home-Vietnamese.pdf)and [Russian](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Food-Safety-at-Home-Russian.pdf).

**Report illnesses.**

Use our [online form](https://tpchd.org/healthy-places/food-safety/report-a-foodborne-illness/) or call (253) 649-1696 to report food-related illnesses. Also contact your healthcare provider.

**Resources**

* [Toss that old wire grill brush!](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Toss-that-old-wire-grill-brush.pdf)
* [Keep pests out](https://tpchd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Keep-Pests-Out.pdf).
* [Current restaurant closures](https://tpchd.org/healthy-places/food-safety/food-establishment-closures/).
* [Service animals](https://tpchd.org/healthy-places/food-safety/service-animals/).
* [Caterers](https://tpchd.org/healthy-places/food-safety/caterers/).

**Recalls**